



Statement of Rep. Julia Letlow (R-LA)

Committee on Education and the Workforce Markup:

“H.R. 734, Protection of Women and Girls in Sports Act & H.R. 5, Parents Bill of Rights Act”

March 8, 2023

(As prepared for delivery)

I welcome the conversations that we’ve had here today as this committee takes up H.R. 5. Having first introduced this bill nearly a year and a half ago, I’m grateful for the opportunity for this legislation to be debated and discussed.

H.R. 5 is not a bill that is designed to be complex and complicated, nor is its intention to be partisan or polarizing. This bill is about one simple and fundamental principle—parents should always have a seat at the table when it comes to their child’s education.

In my home state of Louisiana, we have a Parents Bill of Rights that passed in 2014 with broad, bipartisan support, and we see it work every single day.

Now, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle and some of their political allies have said that this bill is an attack on our hardworking teachers, that it will lead to Congress dictating curriculum to local schools, or telling librarians what they can and cannot have on their shelves.

But in that argument, it’s very clear that their underlying message is that they don’t want schools to have to be accountable to parents. They don’t believe that transparency is a good thing. Rather than opening the doors to welcome parents in as partners, they would rather slam them shut and have government bureaucrats make all the decisions.

I worked in education before I came to Congress, and I’m also a mother. I can tell you without a shadow of a doubt, that when schools attempt to educate children

without buy-in from parents, it leads to disastrous results. I personally don't know a teacher who doesn't welcome parental involvement.

We have mountains of data available to tell us about the massive learning loss that our students suffered during the pandemic. Catching them up to speed and ensuring that we meet the educational standards is going to take a team effort—everyone—parents, families, educators, and administrators, working together towards a common goal.

This bill is the foundation by which we can build those productive partnerships. It is the vehicle by which we can put parents and educators at the same table and have a productive dialog about how we can help our children succeed.

At the end of the day, isn't that what we all want – no matter our party affiliation, I know that we're all here to build a brighter tomorrow for our children and the generations to come.

That's why I'm asking the committee to adopt this substitute amendment and vote yes on the underlying bill—I yield back.

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